The Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project: An Approach to Restoring Nearshore Ecosystems at a Sound-wide Scale.

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Given our emerging understanding that the health of Puget Sound is threatened by a diverse array of anthropogenic stressors operating across a wide range of spatial scales, it is essential that we develop a comprehensive restoration approach to guide actions from local to regional scales. The mission of the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project is to understand how human activities have impacted nearshore ecosystem processes, and develop a spatially-explicit, process-based, Sound-wide restoration plan to strategically restore those processes. Fundamental to this approach is to focus restoration on nearshore processes that form and maintain ecosystem structure, which in turn provide valued functions such as habitat for fish, wildlife, and plants. This concept is central in the principles developed by the Nearshore Science Team (NST) of scientists convened to help guide PSNERP. To better understand how science can be effectively used to inform a large-scale restoration program, the NST has completed a "Lessons Learned" study of similar programs in the United States. These lessons include the importance of external peer-review, a need for a strategic plan for implementing science throughout the program, our current lack of representation of social science disciplines, the role of a lead scientist, and the benefits of attracting and supporting independent science to the program.